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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the decision-making processes and procedures that affect curriculum and identifies the leadership role of different school personnel and the steps involved in making decisions. The following areas of curriculum planning are discussed: (1) what is to be taught to different learners and in what order; (2) what textbooks, media, and other materials are considered appropriate; (3) appropriate teaching methods for a particular set of objectives; (4) what diagnostic tools and tests are needed; (5) procedures used to measure program performance in terms of student achievement. For each of the above components the individual or group responsible for leadership is identified, possible constraining factors are listed, and support systems available are described. (JD)

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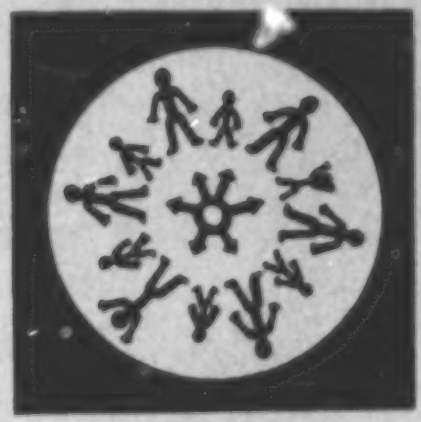
Auburn, Maine

CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT MODEL

Processes and Procedures for Decision Making



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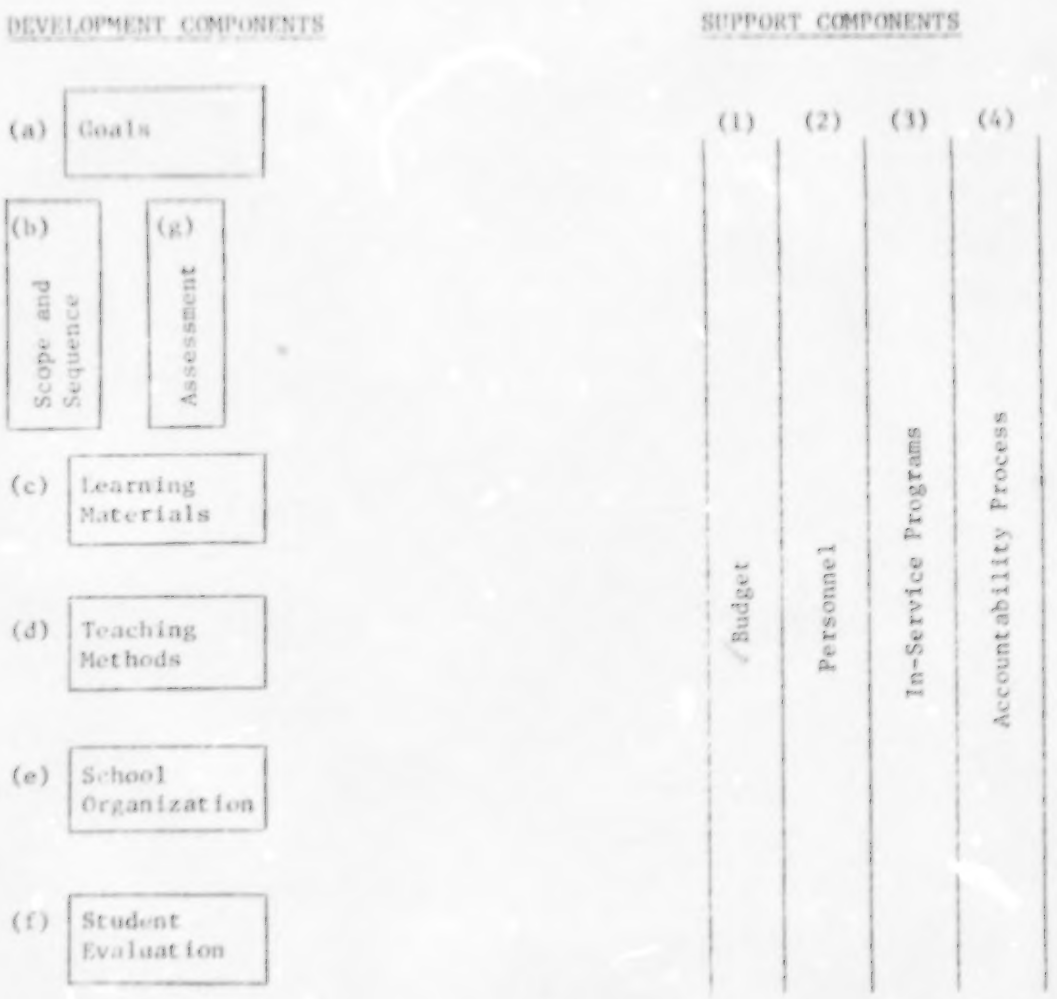

Decision-making about Curriculum in the Auburn, Maine School System takes place in all of the areas described above. The Curriculum for the system and the schools integrates the decisions made in all of the development components supported and constrained by the budget, personnel, in-service, and accountability decision-making procedures of the system. This paper outlines the decision-making processes and procedures that effect curriculum and identifies the leadership role, the key mechanism, and the steps involved in decisions in each area of the model.

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (A)
Goals

Definition - This component provides the statement of principles that govern the curriculum for the Auburn System and under which the individual school curriculum operates.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Central Office
2. Key Mechanism	The System-wide Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee (representing each building, administration, and central office)
3. Implementation Activities	
a. Review existing philosophy	Curriculum Advisory Committee
b. Discuss needs with School and Community	School/Auburn Education Council
c. Prepare goals statement	Central Office and Curriculum Advisory Group
d. Review, suggest modifications	School Principals, Community Advisory Group
e. Prepare final document	Central Office
f. Approval	School Committee

CONSTRAINTS

CLARIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (B)
Scope and Sequence

Definition - This component provides the description of the set of objectives that indicate what is to be taught to different learners in what order to implement the System Goals and System Philosophy.

Function		Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	- for system consistency	- Central Office
	- for school application	- Principal
	- for development	- Asst. Supt.
2. Key Mechanism	- for system consistency	- Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
	- for development	- System-wide Curriculum Task Force with Specialist
3. Steps Involved		
a.	Identify areas of concern	Central Office
b.	Select areas for Division	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
c.	Recommend members of Subject Area Task Forces	Each school unit, administration and Central Office
d.	Select Specialist to work with Task Force	Central Office
e.	Review existing goals and objectives documents	Subject Area Task Force
f.	Arrange for Staff and Community discussion of needs and expectations	Subject Area Task Force
g.	Prepare Draft Curriculum	Specialist
h.	Identify minimal essentials	Subject Area Task Force
i.	Review, analyze and accept draft for discussion and review	Subject Area Task Force
j.	Review and suggest modifications	School
k.	Revise and prepare final draft	Subject Area Task Force and Specialist
l.	Review and approve for system consistency	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee

m.	Review and approve	Superintendent
n.	Review and approve	School Committee
o.	Review system document and identify school specific items	Principal and appropriate School Group
p.	Select School Instructional Objectives Statement including minimal essentials and program for exceptional children	School Unit Special Education
q.	Review School Statements for completeness and consistency in terms of System Scope and Sequence Document	Asst. Superintendent Special Education
r.	Inform teachers of particulars for them and monitor performance	Principal
s.	Prepare instructional plan utilizing school statements	Teacher
t.	Evaluate and report	Principal

CONSTRAINTS

1. Maine Law
2. Federal Law

CLARIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (C)
Learning Materials

Definition - This component describes what textbooks, media, and other materials which are considered appropriate in the Auburn School System for teaching a particular set of objectives. In some instances, more than one alternative set of materials may be identified.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	School Principal or Content Area Department Head or Specialist
2. Key Mechanism	School Level Textbook and Materials Selection Committee/Special Education Specialist
3. Steps Involved	
a. Identify appropriate materials for each objective	Subject Area Task Force and Specialist
b. Approve list of appropriate materials	Superintendent
c. Identify Special Purchase Area from allocated funds	Administrators (by level)
d. Inventory of existing materials and identification of needs	Principal with appropriate School Group/Special Education
e. Review of inventory to determine level and system areas of over-supply, exchange and need	Asst. Superintendent
f. Identify base purchases based on per pupil allocation	School
g. Identify priority areas of school need	Principal with appropriate School Staff/Special Education
h. Identify areas covered by remainder of per pupil allocation	School
i. Identify remaining areas of level and system need	Administrators by level and as system group
j. Allocate available funds to needs	Superintendent
k. Order materials as approved	Principal

l.	Purchase approved materials	Business Office
m.	Receive materials and add to inventory	School Principal

CONSTRAINTS

1. System Philosophy, Goals, Scope and Sequence
2. Learner level and background
3. Individual school offerings
4. State and Federal Law
5. Available commercial texts and materials

CLARIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (B)
Teaching Methods

Definition - This component describes the acceptable and appropriate Teaching Methods for a particular set of objectives. Usually, lower grades more discretely identify process methods that increase the affective learning situation, secondary grades more discretely identify the processes to transmit a body of knowledge. The methods should assist students in developing skills as well as understaading.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Classroom Teacher under the supervision of the Department Head or School Principal
2. Key Mechanism	Instructional goal setting with Teacher including Performance Evaluation Procedures
3. Key Steps Involved	
a. List appropriate methods and required procedures for objectives in Scope and Sequence statement	Subject Area Task Force
b. Inform Teacher of appropriate methods and support persons	Principal with Specialist as appropriate
c. Prepare instructional plan using goal setting process	Teacher with Principal and Specialist
d. Monitor, review, and supervise	Principal assisted by Department Head or Specialist

CONSTRAINTS

1. Background and skills of teachers
2. Board policies and procedures
3. System philosophy and management system
4. School management system

CLARIFICATIONS

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (E)
School Organization

Definition - This component translates system curriculum goals into a structure of options and alternatives available to a learner in a given school.

Function		Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership		School Principal
2. Key Mechanism	- elementary	- Personnel assignment based on personnel strengths, student characteristics and facilities
	- secondary	- Course assignment (Master Schedule) based on program offerings, personnel strengths and facilities
3. Steps Involved		
a. Review existing standards for and structure of school organization		School Task Force
b. Develop program organization for school to provide least restrictive student program		School Task Force or Academic Affairs Council
c. Review proposed program organization		Staff and Auburn Education Council
d. Establish conditions for program operations 1 - basic essential competencies 2 - number of days 3 - personnel roster 4 - attendance areas 5 - budget and personnel contracts 6 - philosophy and goals		School Board with the advice and counsel of the Central Office and appropriate school principal(s)
e. Revise program organization to meet Board conditions and allow for most individualization		Principal and School Staff
f. Review program organization		Appropriate school group and community group
g. Review program organization		Central Office
h. Approve program organization		Board

i. Develop personnel and pupil assignment schedule based on approved program organization	Principal
j. Supervise and review	Central Office, Principal and appropriate school group

CONSTRAINTS

1. Bus schedule and lunch schedule
2. Grade 9 school
3. Physical plant
4. Maine law
5. Standards from State and other accreditation groups

CLARIFICATIONS

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (F)
Student Evaluation

Definition - This component describes the diagnostic tools and tests that document how much and what a particular student has learned in terms of a particular set of objectives and what specific learning activities are needed to develop the basic essential competencies of the curriculum.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Teacher
2. Key Mechanism	Criterion-referenced test and diagnostic tools and tests
3. Steps Involved	
a. Identify set of objectives that apply to a particular learner or group of learners	Teacher
b. Design instructional program for pupil to allow for development of skills, attitudes, and knowledge that relates to objectives	Teacher assisted by Specialist
c. Identification of diagnostic tests and tools to measure student learning with regard to basic essential competencies for a particular set of objectives	Subject Area Task Group assisted by Asst. Superintendent
d. Development of criterion-referenced test to measure individual student learning in an instructional program and in terms of a particular set of objectives	Teachers with Subject Specialist
e. Review student diagnostic results in terms of instructional program needs	Teacher with Specialist especially in Special Education
f. Design of instructional program based on individual student diagnosis	Teacher
g. Testing using diagnostic battery and criterion-reference test	Teacher
h. Collection, scoring and returning reports of diagnostic battery	Asst. Superintendent

i.	Scoring and recording criterion-referenced scores and recording of informal assessments	Teacher
j.	Preparation of individual student diagnostic report and criterion-referenced profile; item analysis of tests to develop student skill profile	Teacher with Principal
k.	Report to or discussion with parent and individual student of diagnostic and criterion-referenced profile	School
l.	Review of reporting system and design of consistent procedures	System-Wide Committee
m.	Review and feedback on reporting system	Teachers, Principals
n.	Approval of reporting system	Board with advice and counsel of Central Office

CONSTRAINTS

1. Limited number of diagnostic batteries relating to particular objectives
2. limited number of criterion-referenced test
3. SRA battery in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, 11
4. Fountain Valley System for elementary grades
5. Testing by School Psychologist for Special Needs Students
6. College Boards at secondary level
7. Grade 4 reading and math diagnostic program

CLARIFICATION

DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT (G)
Assessment

Definition - This component describes the procedures used to measure program performance in terms of student results in achievement in basic essential competencies and other particular objectives in Scope and Sequence Statement.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Central Office
2. Key Mechanism	Achievement Test and College Boards
3. Steps Involved	
a. Identification of appropriate tests for a particular set of objectives and basic essential competencies	Subject Area Task Force
b. Selection and ordering of appropriate test battery	Asst. Superintendent
c. Testing	School
d. Collecting and scoring of battery	Asst. Superintendent
e. Item analysis of battery results and preparation of graphs by grade level in terms of objectives and basic essentials	Asst. Superintendent
f. Specification of instructional plan relating to objectives and basic essentials	School
g. Identification of program areas in need of improvement by comparing instructional plan and achievement results	Principals and teachers assisted by Asst. Superintendent
h. Report of achievement results by level in terms of objectives and basic essentials with proposed instructional program changes to improve performance	School
i. Review and Analysis of School report	Central Office

j.	Review of School Report	Board
k.	Approval of program improvements	Board
l.	Review of school report including proposed program improvements	Community

CONSTRAINTS

1. State-wide testing program
2. Special Needs Pupil Testing
3. Grade 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 SRA testing of achievement and aptitude
4. The particular set of objectives agreed to, the basic essential competency statements, and the available measurement instruments

CLARIFICATION

SUPPORT COMPONENT (1)
Budget

Definition - The approved budget influences decisions about curriculum in the following areas: (a) Personnel including Special Assignments such as the Curriculum Advisory Committee, (b) instructional materials, (c) in-service programs, (d) substitutes, (e) testing regular and special needs, and (f) facilities maintenance and improvement.

Function		Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership -	(a) personnel roster	- Board
	(b) instructional materials and supplies	- Principal
	(c) in-service programs	- Curriculum Advisory Committee
	(d) substitutes	- Principal
	(e) testing	- Asst. Superintendent and Director of Special Education
	(f) facilities maintenance and improvement	- Asst. Superintendent
2. Key Mechanism		Budget Review and Allocation Cycle
3. Steps Involved		
a. Review budget allocations in terms of programs to reach a particular set of objectives at a school level		Principal
b. Review personnel allocations to determine options and alternatives		Principal
c. Review existing materials, facilities, and testing to determine needs to meet particular objectives		Principal and appropriate School Group
d. Establish priority needs identifying basic and improvement needs		School
e. Identify training needs to reach the system objectives at each level		Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
f. Establish in-service needs for each level in system in terms of curriculum objectives and appropriate teaching methods		Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
g. Review and recommend allocation		Superintendent

h.	Revise budget request	Asst. Superintendent, Principal, and Department Head
i.	Review and approve budget	Board
j.	Identify materials expenditures	Principals
k.	Identify facilities expenditures	Asst. Superintendent (building)
l.	Identify in-service services	Asst. Superintendent with the advice and counsel of SDCAC
m.	Purchase services and materials	Business Office

CONSTRAINTS

1. State law and allocation
2. City Council approval
3. Income as projected
4. Contract and Purchasing procedures

CLARIFICATION

SUPPORT COMPONENT (2)
Personnel

Definition - The curriculum provided learners is controlled by the teachers and teacher aides available in a classroom. Other personnel clearly support the classroom personnel. Selection, supervision and retention of personnel are key functions for curriculum improvement. The goal setting process should identify those particular expectations a Principal has for delivery of curriculum by classroom personnel and the evaluation procedures to be utilized.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Principal
2. Key Mechanism	Goal setting process including evaluation procedures
3. Steps Involved	
a. Identify the particular set of objectives that apply at the given level and for the given assignment	Principal assisted by the appropriate Subject Specialist and school personnel
b. Include curriculum expectations in job description	Principal and Asst. Superintendent
c. Select and assign personnel in terms of skills to provide instruction at given level to reach specified objectives	Principal
d. Approve personnel	Superintendent
e. Appoint personnel	Board
f. Negotiate goal setting process with assigned teacher	Principal
g. Provide instruction	Teacher
h. Supervise using agreed-to evaluation procedures	Principal
i. Relate instruction performance to objectives	Teacher and Principal
j. Review assessment information, supervision records and reports	Principal and Teacher
k. Identify improvements needed in instructional program to meet objectives	Principal and Teacher

l.	Agree to instructional improvements possible within budget constraints	Principal and Teacher
m.	Negotiate additional support	Principal

CONSTRAINTS

1. Negotiated contract
2. Skills of personnel assigned to school
3. Skills of applicants

CLARIFICATION

SUPPORT COMPONENT (3)
In-Service Programs

Definition - The purpose of this component is to provide support the curriculum improvement needs that will provide teachers and administrators with the necessary skills, attitudes and knowledges and instructional strategies to implement the set of objectives in the Scope and Sequence Statement.

Function	Person/Group Responsible
1. Leadership	Central Office
2. Key Mechanism	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee utilizing release time and workshop days
3. Steps Involved	
a. Identify instructional strategies to support curriculum objectives	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
b. Identify needs for instructional improvement	Principals
c. Design programs to provide training to personnel in instructional strategies need areas	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee assisted by specialist
d. Review and revise program	Administrative Council
e. Approve program	Central Office
f. Implement program	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee
g. Participate in appropriate training	Administrators and Teachers
h. Evaluate training programs in terms of learning	Participants
i. Evaluate training programs in terms of content and processes relating to curriculum objectives	Staff Development and Curriculum Advisory Committee

CONSTRAINTS

1. Budgeted funds
2. Available trainers
3. Skills and backgrounds of personnel

CLARIFICATION

SUPPORT COMPONENT (4)
Accountability

Definition - The Accountability System describes how the system goals, the Scope and Sequence statement, the school organization, the budget, the teacher instructional plan, and the student achievement are interrelated and support the development of basic essential competencies by students.

	Function	Person/Group Responsible
1.	Leadership	Superintendent
2.	Key Mechanism	Performance Evaluation System
3.	Steps Involved	
	a. Determine system goals	Board
	b. Identify the set of objectives and basic essential competencies to reach goals and prepare Scope and Sequence Statement	Subject Area Task Group assisted by Specialist
	c. Identify learning materials and teaching methods for each objective	Subject Area Task Group assisted by Specialist
	d. Identify school organization and teacher instructional plan to implement objectives within approved budget, personnel allocation and student attendance assignment	Principal
	e. Identify appropriate measures of student achievement by level and by instructional plan; complete testing program	Asst. Superintendent
	f. Identify areas of instructional improvement to reach basic essential competencies for a given grade level utilizing goal setting process and implement plan	Principal and Teacher
	g. Identify areas of budget and personnel needs to reach basic essential competencies for a given grade level	Principal/Asst. Superintendent

h.	Review achievement and areas of improvement and negotiate school improvement plan	Principal and Central Office
i.	Report achievement and school improvement plan to Board	Superintendent
j.	Approve school improvement plan	Board

CONSTRAINTS

1. Available budget and personnel
2. Time schedule for completing steps needed to install components of a complete system
3. Reliability and validity of achievement measures for objectives

CLARIFICATION